

What Is Claimed Is:

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1. A method of facilitating, managing and coordinating the operation of a competitive marketplace using the Internet, the method comprising the steps of:
- (a) collecting bids for market services from a plurality of customers over the Internet;
 - (b) calculating a clearing price for a market service; and
 - (c) calculating settlement information based upon the clearing price calculated in step (b) and the bids collected in step (a).
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2. A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of creating an invoice for each of the plurality of customers from the settlement information calculated in step (c) and forwarding the invoice for each customer to the customer's work station over the Internet.
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3. A method according to claim 1 wherein step (b) comprises stacking the bids collected in step (a) from lowest price to highest and matching demand for the market service with a bid in the stack.
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4. The method of claim 1 further comprising step (d) of collecting contract information from at least one customer.
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5. The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises calculating accounts payable and accounts receivable.
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6. The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises a step (a)(i) of collecting supply-side bids from energy generators.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein step (a) comprises a step (a)(ii) of collecting demand-side bids from consumers of power.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises steps (c)(i) of receiving meter information and (c)(ii) calculating accounts payable and receivable by multiplying the received meter reading data by the clearing price calculated in step (b).
9. The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises step (c)(i) of confirming that data necessary to complete settlement for a trading interval is available.
10. The method of claim 4 further comprising step (e) of collecting hourly meter reading data and wherein step (d) of collecting contract information includes step (d)(ii) of

overriding step (c) and calculating settlement information based upon contract price and meter reading data.

11. The method of claim 4 further comprising step (e) of sending a confirmation notice to the customer over the Internet that the contract collected in step (d) has been accepted.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising step (d) of receiving trading interval meter reading data.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising step (e) of receiving monthly meter reading data.

14. The method of claim 12 further comprising step (e) of validating each trading interval meter reading data.

15. The method of claim 12 further comprising step (e) of modifying trading interval meter reading data.

16. A method according to claim 1 wherein step (a) is implemented through a graphical user interface.

17. A method according to claim 1 wherein step (a) is implemented through a bulk file upload facility.

18. A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of viewing bid information collected in step (a).

19. A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of modifying bid information collected in step (a).

20. A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of verifying that a price and energy level value exist for each trading interval within a scheduled dispatch period.

21. A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (a) of collecting AGC bid data per unit per scheduled dispatch period.

22. A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of notifying a customer that the bid information collected in step (a) is accepted.

23. A method according to claim 4 wherein the contract information has pre-determined condition associated therewith and the method further comprises a step (e) of dispatching a market service only if the pre-determined condition associated with the contract is met.

24. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step (d) of providing a market information publishing component that supplies a variety of customer informational needs.

25. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step (d) of providing a database population component that reorganizes data from many different sources into a common repository designed to suit customers' needs.

26. The method of claim 25 further comprising a step (e) of providing a report generation component that creates a report whenever a customer so requests wherein the report generation component takes data from the database population component.

27. A system for managing and coordinating the operation of a competitive energy marketplace, the system comprising:

a market operator;

a power system component that represents a network model of a physical power system including generating units, load facilities, transmission lines, and network areas;

a customer component that manages all information about entities that have a business relationship with the market operator, wherein the power system component and customer component are operatively coupled to the market operator to receive data from the market operator;

a bid component that enables customers to submit bids for energy services;

a meter reading component that stores meter readings submitted by customers, wherein the bid component and meter reading component are operatively coupled to customer users;

a settlement component that financially settles all markets based upon meter readings, operational information, bids and clearing prices wherein the settlement component is operatively coupled to the power system, customers, bid and meter reading components to receive data therefrom; and

a bill component operatively coupled to receive data from the customer and settlement components wherein the bill component summarizes the financial activity for each customer to be used on an invoice for services provided and/or received.

28. The system of claim 27 wherein the bid component enables customers to submit bids via a graphical user interface.

29. The system of claim 27 wherein the bid component enables customers to submit bids via bulk file upload facility.

30. The system of claim 27 further comprising a contract component operatively coupled to the settlement component wherein the contract component enables customers to submit contracts for services.

31. The system of claim 30 wherein the contract component enables customers to submit contracts via a graphical user interface.

32. The system of claim 30 wherein the contract component enables customers to submit contracts via a bulk file upload facility.

33. The system of claim 30 further comprising a market information publishing component that receives data from the customer, settlement, bill, meter reading, contract bid and power system components.

34. The system of claim 33 wherein the market information publishing component includes a database population component and a report generation component.

35. A method of facilitating, managing and coordinating the operation of a competitive marketplace using the Internet, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) collecting bid information for market services from a plurality of customers;

(b) collecting contract information for market services from at least one of the plurality of customers;

(c) scheduling the operation of units that provide the market services according to the bid and contract information collected in steps (a) and (b);

(d) deploying the operation of the units scheduled in step (c);

(e) collecting meter reading information from the units scheduled in step (c);

and

(f) settling the market in accordance with the bid and contract information collected in steps (a) and (b) and meter reading information collected in step (e).

36. The method of claim 35 further comprising step (g) of billing the plurality of customers according to the settlement determined in step (f).

37. The method of claim 35 further comprising step (g) of providing the schedule determined in step (c) to the plurality of customers.

38. The method of claim 35 further comprising step (g) of providing settlement information determined in step (f) to the plurality of customers.

5 39. The method of claim 35 herein steps (a) , (b) and (e) are performed over the Internet.

40. A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for interfacing with a competitive marketplace, the computer program comprising:

10 code for collecting bids for market services from a plurality of customers over the Internet;
code for calculating a clearing price for a market service; and
code for calculating settlement information based upon the clearing price calculated and the bids collected.

15 41. An article of manufacture for facilitating the operation of a competitive marketplace, the article of manufacture comprising a computer readable medium having a management interface instructions comprising:

collecting bids for market services from a plurality of customers over the Internet;
calculating a clearing price for a market service; and
calculating settlement information based upon the clearing price calculated in step (b)
20 and the bids collected.